

DAY xx/xx/xx

Historiography & Genre Group Activity

The Reign of Terror and death of a king, 1792

DRIVING QUESTION: How does genre and medium affect the portrayal of historical narrative?

Instructions <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Divide into groups.2. (15 min) Skim or watch the two items you receive.3. (15 min) Discuss and respond to the questions provided. How do the differences in genre and medium change the historical narrative of the Reign of Terror? <hr/> How do genre and medium change the communication of information? <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Audience→ Accessibility→ Understanding of time and place→ Leisure & entertainment→ Range and scope of story→→→	What was the Reign of Terror? <p>In 1789, the common people of France Revolted against church (Catholic) and state (absolute monarchy). By 1792, the poor were still starving and the new constitutional monarchy was facing foreign invasion and civil war.</p> <p>In September of 1792, the more radical factions of the revolution proclaimed the state a republic. Due to his symbolic status as monarch and his collusion with foreign governments against the revolution, the new National Convention sentenced King Louis XVI to death by guillotine.</p> <p>In the years that followed, increasingly more (accused) political dissidents were condemned to die. By 1794, at least 16,000 had been guillotined in what became known as the Reign of Terror. A “White Terror” would follow in 1795, wherein the new, more conservative government sentenced radical revolutionaries to death to regain control.</p>
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SOURCES

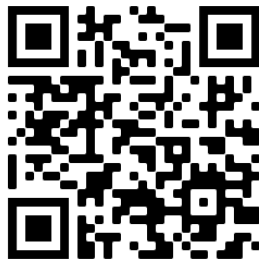
Group 1:

- *A Place of Greater Safety*, by Hilary Mantel, pp. 602-608 (Novel, literary historical fiction, 1992)
- *Assassin's Creed Unity* (PS4 video game, 2014); YouTube playthrough clip (0:00 - 3:40): <https://bit.ly/unityclip>



Group 2:

- *The Guillotine and the Terror*, by Daniel Arasse, pp. 48-53 (Academic history monograph, 1991)
- *The French Revolution* (TV documentary, The History Channel, 2005); YouTube clip (55:27 - 59:03): <https://bit.ly/historyclip>



Group 3:

- *Vive la Revolution*, by Mark Steel, pp. 164-170 (Nonfiction, comedy, 2006)
- *Guillotine: The Revolutionary Card Game Where You Win by Getting a Head* (Card game, 2011)

Group 4:

- *Robespierre: Master of the Guillotine*, by John DiConsiglio, pp. 82-87 (Children's nonfiction, 2008)
- *Sherman & Mr. Peabody* (3D animation, 2014); YouTube clip (2:00 - 5:41): <https://bit.ly/shermanclip>



Answer the following questions that feel most **relevant** to your sources and that you find most **interesting**. You do **NOT** need to respond to every single one.

REMEMBER our guiding question: *How does changing genre or medium affect the portrayal of historical narrative?* We are not deciding whether one source is more “accurate” than the other, but examining what each source is uniquely capable of doing with historical narrative.

1. CREATOR(S): What do we know about the texts’ creators at first glance? What are their claims to authority and how easy is this to discern?
2. AUDIENCE(S): Who are the texts’ audiences? How large is their potential reach?
3. IMPACT: What emotions do the texts inspire? What will you remember about them?
4. ENGAGEMENT: How is the audience meant to engage with the objects? What are the objects’ functions (entertainment, education, etc.)?
5. SOURCES: What evidence is included (primary and/or secondary sources)? How is it balanced with interpretation?

6. EVENT: What does each item tell us about the event (whether or not it's true)? What is left out?
7. PEOPLE: How are the people or characters described?
8. TIME: How is the passage of time depicted? Does this change your understanding of what occurred?
9. PLACE: How is the space surrounding the event described? What effect does this have on your experience?
10. WHAT ELSE do you find interesting when comparing and contrasting these texts?